



Tech. Sgt. Jenny Ruiz, enlisted aide to AETC Commander Gen. William Looney III, dusts the fireplace mantel in the general's historical 1930's house.

Enlisted Aides

Helping top generals with everyday tasks

By Staff Sgt. Lindsey Maurice
Wingspread editor

Usually when people hear the words "enlisted aide" they automatically think of a maid, cook or butler.

An Air Force enlisted aide is none of the above. Include the tasks of administrative duties, culinary skills, property and grounds maintenance, maintaining a properly run house, entertainment, uniform care, official guest care, security and supporting a general on temporary duty and a person might begin to see the big picture.

"It's not just polishing boots and sweeping floors. There's so much more to it than that. It's like combining the tasks of a chef, personal assistant and household manager all in

one," said Tech. Sgt. Jenny Ruiz, who with Master Sgt. Roy Bowser serve as enlisted aides for Air Education and Training Command Commander Gen. William Looney III.

Air Force enlisted aide duty is an all-volunteer special duty open to most second-term and career Airmen looking for a unique and challenging opportunity, Sergeant Ruiz said. During the tenure, enlisted aides can expect to earn civilian recognized training certifications in household management and culinary arts.

"The position of enlisted aide is very important," said General Looney. "They not only alleviate the demands that would otherwise be placed on the general officer as far as maintaining the household, but they are crucial to community outreach through social engagements. With the assistance of Sergeant Bowser and Sergeant Ruiz I can focus on the responsibilities that come with my position."

All four-star general officers are authorized two enlisted aides and three-star generals one. General officers serving in special command positions such as the Chief of Staff of the Air Force are authorized up to four enlisted aides. In addition, there are some one-and two-star generals who are authorized an aide based on their position such as numbered Air Force commanders, according to the enlisted aide Web site.

As General Looney's aides, Sergeant Bowser and Sergeant Ruiz handle everything from the upkeep of the four-star's historical 1930's house to maintaining his uniforms, catering official dinner parties and handling administrative work.

While even the smallest tasks such as cleaning may sound simple, factor in the general's residence is 6,000 square feet with 18 rooms, and a person can understand just how much the job entails.

"A dinner party in itself takes a lot of time and planning to make it a success," said Sergeant Bowser. "Once we find out who is coming we research recipes and test them out. Then we plan the menu for a five-course gourmet meal, do the shopping, set up the formal dining room, cook, and serve the guests with the help of protocol and wait staff. It isn't something to be taken lightly."

General Looney's wife, Marilyn, said she couldn't be happier with Sergeant Bowser and Sergeant Ruiz's work.



Master Sgt. Roy Bowser, enlisted aide to Air Education and Training Command Commander Gen. William Looney III, dices a stalk of celery in the general's kitchen. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Lindsey Maurice)

"I'm just so impressed with the work they do," she said. "As busy as my husband and I are there's no way we could do what Roy and Jenny do on top of that. They're remarkable."

While some aides may work for a variety of generals in just a few years, some remain with the same one for a long time. Sergeant Bowser has been General Looney's aide for six years and has accompanied him on four assignments.

"It's been great working with Sergeant Bowser," General Looney said. "Not only has he been extraordinary in managing the household and whatever other tasks he is faced with, but he has taught my wife and me so much about the enlisted corps."

One of the newest members to the enlisted aide career field is Tech. Sgt. Michelle Santiago, enlisted aide to 19th Air Force Commander Maj. Gen. Marc Rogers. Sergeant Santiago has been assisting General Rogers for almost three months.

"I got into the field because I was looking for another way to challenge myself," she said. "So far, I've really enjoyed all aspects of the job. The dinner parties can be nerve-racking sometimes, but I'm getting the hang of it. Being an enlisted aide is very fulfilling, but you have to have the desire to do it and the willingness to learn new things."

The former training instructor said that being a general's aide requires certain qualities.

"An enlisted aide has to have initiative," she said. "You have to have good time management skills, be flexible and always take pride in what you do. You have to give 100 percent all the time."

Staff Sgt. Carlton Pugh, enlisted aide to AETC Vice Commander Lt. Gen. Dennis Larsen, said anyone who has an interest in becoming an enlisted aide should definitely pursue it.

"You can learn so much in this field," he said. "Every day's an adventure."

"And the opportunities are endless," added Sergeant Bowser. "The people you meet, the places you see and the training you receive are all amazing."

Sergeant Ruiz said applying to become an enlisted aide is the best career decision she ever made.

"This is by far the most rewarding job I've ever had in my life," she said. "Not a day goes by where I don't go home with a sense of satisfaction."

For more information on the enlisted aide career field and how to apply, visit the Senior Leader Management Web site at <https://www.afsl.hq.af.mil/dpg/enlaide/index.htm>.



Staff Sgt. Carlton Pugh, enlisted aide to AETC Vice Commander Lt. Gen. Dennis Larsen, plants flowers in front of the general's house.

AETC Enlisted Aide Training

Orientation Training

One-week course taught at Randolph AFB

Attendees learn the basics of how to be an enlisted aide, including the 10 service standards:

- Administrative duties
- Culinary
- Housekeeping
- Housing maintenance
- Property and grounds maintenance
- Security
- Entertainment
- General officer TDY
- Clothing and uniform care
- Guest care

Food Service Specialties Course

Two-week course taught at Randolph AFB

Attendees learn the ins and outs of culinary arts including:

- Culinary skills for preparing 7-course meals
- Sanitation and safety
- Nutrition
- Table set-up and service
- Protocol
- Basic bar setup and mixology skills
- Menu planning

Advanced Culinary Skills Training Course

Four-week course taught at Fort Lee, N.J.

Trains select food service personnel in advanced culinary techniques employing the train-the-trainer concept.

Provides advanced techniques and skills required for menu planning, advanced gourmet food preparation and production, menu evaluation and meal service.

Household Management Certification Program

Four-week course taught at Starkey International Institute in Denver, Colo.

Covers similar topics taught in orientation training but on an advanced level.